

NOTES ON AUSTRALIAN ORCHIDS.

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DIURIS PUNCTATA Sm. var. *SULFUREA*, n. var.

Sepalum dorsale et petala lateralia sulfurea; sepala lateralia pallida; labellum fere aurantiacum.

Dorsal sepal and lateral petals clear sulphur yellow; lateral sepals pale green; labellum darker than the other segments, almost orange.

Green Valley, Guyra, N.S.W., T. P. Skinner, x.1936 and x.1943.

Diuris punctata is a variable species, but a sulphur-coloured form is so distinctive that it merits a varietal name. Typically the flowers are lilac or lavender; occasionally they are purple, or in some localities are so faintly coloured as to be mistaken for *D. alba* R.Br. Through the kindness of the Rev. E. Norman McKie, Guyra, I received sulphur-coloured flowers from Mr. Skinner in 1936. I thought it possible that they were due to some "freakishness" arising out of seasonal conditions, but two beautiful specimens sent in October, 1943, satisfied me that this cannot be the case. The flowers are of good size, and have a perfume like the old-fashioned *Iris germanica*. The typical form has this perfume occasionally, but in most New South Wales districts it is scentless.

SARCOCHILUS FITZGERALDII F. Muell., var. *AEMULUS*, n. var.

Flores punicei cum maculis rubidis numerosis.

Flowers wholly pink or pale crimson with numerous deep red blotches and markings.

This is surely the most attractive variety of a very beautiful species. Typically, the flowers are white with dark crimson blotches at the base of the perianth segments; occasionally they are pure white without any blotches. Var. *aemulus* was collected by me during an excursion with Mr. and Mrs. D. J. Barr of Bellingen, N.S.W., to a mountain gorge near Gleniffer, a few miles north of Bellingen. It was not flowering, and I did not realize its distinctive character until the spring of 1935, when it flowered in my bush-house. During the next few years the plant suffered somewhat from changes of residence, and no flowers appeared again until October, 1943, when two richly-coloured racemes were produced.

PRASOPHYLLUM FITZGERALDII Rogers & Maiden.

Wallerawang, N.S.W.; Mrs. A. I. Smith, xii.1942 and i.1944. This is a new record for New South Wales, and so far as I am aware the species has not previously been found beyond South Australia. Mrs. Smith sent specimens to the National Herbarium at Sydney about Christmas time, 1942; unfortunately by the time they came into my hands the flowers were quite withered. After softening some out, I concluded that they represented a robust form of *P. gracile* Rogers, although lacking the bidentate tips to the lateral sepals of that species; accordingly they were recorded in "Orchids of New South Wales" (National Herbarium of N.S.W., 1943) under that name. Living plants received from Mrs. Smith in January, 1944, however, proved my first determination wrong, and the species is in my opinion undoubtedly *P. Fitzgeraldii*. This is one of the tall and comparatively robust species of *Prasophyllum*. Typically the flowers are described as prune-coloured, opening from about the middle of the spike first. One of Mrs. Smith's specimens conformed to this description precisely; in the others the flowers were greenish with pink or prune-coloured striations. The history of this species is rather interesting.

It is well known that after the death of R. D. Fitzgerald in 1892, Messrs. Henry Deane and A. J. Stopps (Fitzgerald's lithographer) were requested to continue the publication of the posthumous plates left by him in connection with his classic volumes on Australian orchids. In Vol. ii, Part 5, we have the results of their work, publication then being stopped by the Government of the day. One consequence of this stoppage was that several of the plates were lithographed but never published. Among these is one depicting *Prasophyllum Frenchii* F. Muell. and *Prasophyllum Fitzgeraldii*, the latter being a *nomen nudum*, and no description of it was known. In 1895, Tate published it as a South Australian species, giving Deane as the author of the name (*Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Aust.*, xix, 1895, p. 82). A few years later, Mr. J. H. Maiden sent a copy of the unpublished plate to Dr. R. S. Rogers of Adelaide, who at once recognized *P. Fitzgeraldii* as a South Australian plant known to him, which he had purposed to describe and publish. Tate, however, could give no information in regard to Fitzgerald's connection with it, and Deane disclaimed any personal knowledge of it. He had clearly forgotten certain letters written to him by Baron von Mueller in 1894-5, which are now in the National Herbarium at Sydney, and which will be cited presently. Maiden and Rogers decided to publish the species, under their joint names, as *P. Fitzgeraldii*, and their description and comments will be found in *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Aust.*, xxxiii, 1909, pp. 202, 212, 216. Mueller's letters to Deane, however, clear up all doubt as to the original sponsor of the name, though technically he may not be termed the author. Under date 8.iii.1894, Mueller writes: "Kindly tell the Hon. Dr. Norton that I believe his view regarding this *Prasophyllum* as new is quite tenable, and to publish it under the name already given by the hon. gentleman." What that name was is made clear in a further letter dated 10.x.1895, in which the Baron expresses his pleasure "that now the Hon. Dr. Norton's *Prasophyllum Fitzgeraldii* is to appear". This was in reference to the next series of plates being edited by Deane and Stopps—which never reached publication. Dr. Norton, a well-known public man of the day, was a great friend of Fitzgerald's, and had given strong support to the publication of "Australian Orchids" under Government auspices.

THELYMITRA CARNEA R.Br.

A specimen received from Mr. H. Goldsack, of Coromandel Valley, near Adelaide, is conclusive proof that this species extends to South Australia. For many years there was confusion between *T. carnea* R.Br. and *T. rubra* Fitzg. Ewart and others considered them conspecific. Nicholls cleared up the confusion in *Vict. Nat.*, lvii, 1940, p. 103, showing that Fitzgerald was completely justified in treating them as distinct species, and also that Mueller's *T. Elizabethae* was merely a form of *T. carnea*. The latter, however, was presumed to be restricted to New South Wales and Victoria, *T. rubra* occurring in Victoria, South and Western Australia, and Tasmania. Since then the present writer has recorded *T. rubra* in New South Wales (these PROCEEDINGS, lxviii, 1943, p. 9); and now we have Mr. Goldsack's evidence that *T. carnea* extends much farther west than was supposed. His specimen is thoroughly typical in every respect.

CALADENIA CARNEA R.Br.

In "Orchids of New South Wales" (National Herbarium of N.S.W., 1943) the present writer in a note on this species, p. 64, expressed the opinion that the plant figured in Hooker's *Flora Tasmaniae*, ii, 29, t. 125 B, over the name *C. angustata* Lindl., was a form of *C. carnea*. Subsequently, further study of the plate suggested that it represented the closely allied species *C. alpina* Rogers. This conclusion had been reached independently by Mr. W. H. Nicholls, who has collected and handled many specimens of *C. alpina*.

On the same page of the work just referred to, I expressed the view that both the New Zealand species *C. minor* Hook. f. and *C. exigua* Cheeseman should be included in *C. carnea*, and I now definitely propose that they be so included. As is well known to all workers among Australian orchids, *C. carnea* is a species of great variability. I have found it impossible to distinguish Hooker's and Cheeseman's plants from certain forms collected on the mainland of Australia and in Tasmania, and I am of opinion that *C. minor* Hook. f. and *C. carnea* R. Br. var. *pygmaea* Rogers, are identical. If this be

correct, *C. minor* has no specific status, and should be transferred to *C. carnea* under Rogers' variety *pygmaea*. Cheeseman himself appears to have felt some doubt about the status of *C. exigua*, for he first published it as a variety of *C. minor* (*Manual of N.Z. Flora*, 1906, p. 688). It agrees with small forms of *C. carnea* except for the reduction of the marginal calli on the mid-lobe of the labellum to two; and this characteristic has been observed in diminutive flowers of *C. carnea* in Australia. Cheeseman's name may be retained as *C. carnea* var. *exigua*, n. comb.
